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Montana Schools

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The education legislators talk shop

Rep. Ann Mary Dussault

Sen. Chet Blaylock

Montana Schools **interviews House Education Committee Chairwoman Ann Mary Dussault and Senate Education Committee Chairman Chet Blaylock**

Do you think the 45th Legislature is going to be a good legislature for education? Have you seen any revealing votes?

It's really too early to tell. I think there's a lot of support for concepts such as adult basic education, programs for gifted kids—those kinds of things. I think there's a lot of sympathy for greater funding of the school foundation program. The problem is we're getting to the point where we're having to look seriously at dollars and cents. The budget projections are pretty slim. When we begin to cut and hack at the budget, the programs that are considered unnecessary are the first ones to go. Programs for adult basic education and gifted and talented may not be unnecessary, but they are frills in some people's minds, so they may bite the dust.

What do you think will be the first vote to show how the Legislature will go? Will it be on the foundation or on another issue?

Probably individual kinds of issues. Traditionally, we don't deal with the foundation program realistically until the end of the session. Some people accuse us of balancing the budget with the foundation, and there's some credence to it, although it's not really that simple. On some of the other programs like adults, gifted and community education—these we'll get an inclination for before we get into the foundation or the university budget.

How short of dollars are we?

Well, we're pretty short. In this sense, number one, the majority of nonrecurring funds that we have to play around with are committed, primarily to the Governor's Homestead Act—the tax relief program. The projection as I understand it for income over the biennium is only about ten per cent over what we saw in the past biennium. That's not a lot of dollars. So there's a lot of hold-the-line spending and a lot of curbing of growth and a lot of cutting and hacking.

So the Legislature is, in that sense, pretty conservative?

Pretty conservative even by philosophy, and fiscally conservative by necessity, also.

Two sessions ago the Legislature was asking the Board to come up with a philosophy of education for Montanans. Does the fact that the Legislature then was considering those kinds of questions and that the present one isn't indicate something?

We're down to nuts and bolts. And that's too bad because it doesn't give us a lot of room to play around with innovative ideas and concepts. We tend to be very practical. Even the necessary innovative ideas tend to bite the dust.

Do you think the foundation program will be fully funded?

No. Of course that depends on what you mean by fully funded.

Well, 80 per cent of the maximum budget without a vote.

It's really hard to tell right now. The education committee right now is convinced that the Governor's projections are too low. They have not taken any stand past that. My own feeling is that the legislative fiscal analyst's figures are too low also. We are hoping to get somewhere around a nine to ten per cent increase in the schedules and of course, that's lower than OPI or MEA's requests. We still have bills to be acted on that will influence that. We're looking at some other revenue sources that we are not certain are going to be there.

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In your opinion, Senator Blaylock, how does this legislative session compare with the previous session with regard to education?

It's not as friendly to education by any means.

Can you see a particular reason for that attitude?

It's a more conservative body.

Do you think the Legislature is asking more accountability from education?

They mouth the word "accountability" but one wonders if our legislators really want it. For instance, would legislators and school boards really want to know how much money is frittered away on superfluous activities and

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Rep. Ann Mary Dussault Sen. Chet Blaylock

Can you give an example of those sources?

The Governor has two measures introduced and in fact, this revenue is included in his projections. Apparently the federal government has increased the percentage of mineral tax the state can withhold. The mineral tax right now is directed to the highway fund. As I understand it, there's a bill to the effect that the excess revenue the state will accrue will go to school foundation programs. It's about three million dollars. But those are bills that haven't been acted on yet, and we have increases in other areas—we have increased transportation schedules. All those things have an impact on the final dollars and cents figures we have to talk about. By the way, that's part of the reason we have to hold off on the foundation until the last of the session.

Are there special educational areas you are interested in seeing have more funding?

I think it's fine that we talk about a basic education, but I don't think that goes far enough. I do think kids with special needs need special programs, both for those who are handicapped or disabled and those who are particularly gifted. We are moving very quickly in the area of special education for the disabled kids, but I don't think we are doing an awful lot for those kids at the other end of the spectrum. Most of the data shows that those kids really can't fend for themselves. We have always tended to believe that if they are bright or talented they can take care of themselves, but the facts don't show that. Those kids are underachieving and it is a waste.

What kind of special programs would you like to see?

I'm not familiar with the spectrum of possibilities.

Do you think it needs a study?

No. There are people in the school districts who have good ideas. The bill we have in this session will let them design their own programs. I think that's a good way to let them start those programs. Let the local school districts decide if they want it and design some model programs other communities can adopt. The Legislature doesn't have to tell the schools what to do. The expertise should be there.

Are Montana teachers adequately paid?

I don't have hard figures, my suspicion is no. Most of the comment this session from teacher groups indicate they are beginning to catch up, that they have made some substantial gains primarily through the bargaining process. I have some strong biases. Number one, I think teachers should be the best paid people in our society and second, we should demand much more quality from teachers. Those two things should go hand in hand.

That gets at a question that's coming up all over the country—

accountability. Are we near legislation for accountability at the state level?

The problem is that usually when we talk about accountability we are talking about fiscal accountability. That's important; dollars should be spent the way they were intended. However, I think it's very important to talk about program accountability, and more importantly, to ask: are kids learning? But, you know, I haven't seen any models that work; it's just really complex. Individualized, competency-based instruction—maybe that comes closest to it. But I'm not an expert in that field. If you want to talk about the ideal, we shouldn't be concerned about program accountability based on a fiscal judgment. We should be concerned about program accountability primarily. The problem with most accountability systems is all they do is increase the paper work. Special education is a prime example. You have to account for all those dollars, but all we've done is increase tbe paperwork and the kids are waiting three months to get services.

I'm sure you know the Office has a task force that should draw some conclusions about that and you have to consider that Montana was the first state to have a 100 percent state-supported program.

That presents an interesting problem too, because if you started talking about accountability, you must think about control. One of the issues in special education is local control vs. state control. The fact is that with 100 percent funding, you've got to have state control.

Are you an advocate of local control?

Oh sure. Who isn't? The fact of the matter is, in special education the buck stops in OPI for the accountability because they are pure state bucks. I'm concerned that kids get good programs, and that's the reason for some of the changes we are trying to make in the special education law. If kids get good programs with 100 percent financing and state control, then that's the way it's going to be as far as I'm concerned. If they are going to get better programming by shifting some of the dollar burden and the responsibility at the local level, then fine. It's a matter of kids getting tbe right programs.

unnecessary, costly administration. How much school time is lost and money wasted entertaining the downtown folks.

Are there particular educational programs that you believe are suffering right now because of a lack of funds?

Yes, in a number of schools we have too many children in a classroom. That hurts the whole program. It doesn't matter how much we pump in. The schools are like the cookie monster - they simply eat more.

The Governor's budget suggests a 6 per cent increase in funding of the foundation program. Do you feel this is adequate?

No. We can't get by on 6 per cent, not without a drastic reduction in present services to schools. If we go to something like that, then there's going to be real fighting in school districts about what our priorities are, because we're going to have to cut items if we go that low. The bill I'm sponsoring, SB 271, prepared by the MEA suggests a 13.6 per cent increase the first year and a 11.5 per cent increase the second year.

Have you sponsored other legislation that you feel would benefit education?

I'm sponsoring SB 68 which is the teacher licensure bill. This bill gives teachers a voice in setting up the criteria by which one becomes a teacher in Montana. These criteria would be recommended to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and would be used in certifying teachers coming out of our university system or teachers from other states applying for a certificate in Montana. I've long believed in this. We are the only profession in Montana tbat doesn't do this. The board suggested we establish these criteria to be quite broad based, so we've amended the membership to include six classroom teachers, three high school and three elementary; one administrator; two school board members; the State Superintendent or designee and the Commissioner of Higher Education or designee.

What do you feel are the most critical problems facing Montana schools today?

We have a real problem facing education in Montana from the administrative level with this continuing fight between the Board of Public Education and the Superintendent of Public Instruction. This difficulty is going to have to be solved. One or the other of these two power centers will disappear as I see it. I suggested in the Senate Education Committee hearing that if they really wanted to dismantle the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, they should do it honestly and in a straightforward manner and propose a constitutional amendment abolishing that office. Give it to the people in the State of Montana and see if they want to do that. I also don't agree with the concepts of HB 69 which would remove the power of that office to regulate vocational education. I think that's a piecemeal chipping away at the power of that office. Again, the people should decide.

In your opinion, how is the quality of education in Montana's schools?

Quite good, I think. We have areas just like any state where we have really weak schools and I would be critical of our Office of Public Instruction from that standpoint. We should be working harder in these local communities, although I realize this is a difficult area to get into because there's a natural reaction on the part of the local community to "keep your nose out of our business." However, if a school is doing a poor job for the children, I think something should be at least pointed out to the community about the quality of the school and I'm not too sure we're doing that. I think we have in many of our school systems too many administrators and they're costly. It came out the other day that teacher salaries have gone up an average of 6 per cent and administrative salaries have increased by 12 per cent—double that of teachers. The tendency is to add administrative personnel who don't administrate. The people who produce are the classroom teachers. We should have the very best classroom teachers available working with our kids.

Do you think that teachers or administrators experience difficulty when they become involved in politics in Montana?

Teachers and administrators should have the courage to get involved in politics. I've always done it. I started in Chinook speaking out and saying what I wanted to say. I think that every citizen has a duty to participate in government. If you're not participating, as the old cliche goes, you're part of the problem, not part of the solution.

Do you believe we will have the same conservative attitude in the next legislative session?

Montana is a fairly conservative state. You find an ambivalent attitude on the part of some of the legislators bere. On the one hand, they will vote against giving teachers any more rights; but, on the other hand, these same people will vote increased funding for schools. If we're doing fairly well, we might get a few more liberals elected. If the economy turns sour then people want to hang on to their tax money even more tightly . . . .

Do you have any suggestions for alternative funding methods for Montana's schools?

We could begin to rely less heavily on property tax and increase funding from the state level. However, if you fund it from the state level, the state will have more to say about your education. The local school board is going to have to answer to whatever source they get their money from. Money is power - face it. If we turn over more to the state level, it's axiomatic, we'll probably begin talking about consolidation.

Nominations open for library honor

The Montana Library Association presents annually an award and a citation of honor to a school administrator who merits recognition for outstanding support and contribution to the school library program. This year's award program is sponsored by the MLA to help develop an atmosphere that will foster the improvement of library service in Montana. Nomination forms and more information are available from Susan Nissen, 411 Cottonwood No. 2, Laurel 59044. The deadline for submitting entries for the award is April 1.

Regional workshops replace Title I yearly convention

At the recommendation of school persons, trustees and Title I advisory council members, the yearly Title I conference has been replaced by six regional workshops beginning in late March and ending the first week in May.

The purpose of the workshops is to provide training and discussion in four subjects: (1) to encourage parents and parent advisory councils to become involved in Title I, (2) to present three models for program evaluation, (3) to provide assistance in fiscal accountability and (4) to discuss each individual district's Title I application and fiscal statements.

A planning form is being sent to schools by the Office of Public Instruction Title I staff. The workshops tentatively are scheduled for the following sites and dates: Glendive, March 22-23; Glasgow, March 24-25; Great Falls, March 31, April 1; Billings, April 14-15; Butte, April 28-29; Missoula, May 5-6.

Freedoms Foundation award established

Teachers who excell in teaching about the private enterprise system could receive a cash award under a new program sponsored by the Freedoms Foundation.

Known as "Awards for Excellence in Private Enterprise Education," the program annually will provide up to 20 awards of $5,000 each year for a five-year period, foundation release said. Awards will be made to faculty members who "conceive and conduct significant and innovative courses or projects to promote a better understanding of our country's private economic system." Four categories for awards have been established: 1) high schools, 2) junior colleges and community colleges, 3) large and 4) small colleges and universities.

The deadline for nominations is Aug. 1 and recipients of the award will be announced Feb. 22, 1978. More information is available from Freedoms Foundation, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania 19481.

Asbestos ceilings may be hazardous

Asbestos ceilings in schools could pose a serious health hazard to students and staff according to the Environmental Protection Agency which has determined that asbestos fibers caught in lung tissue can cause cancer or other respiratory illness.

The New Jersey State Department of Education discovered that many schools built between 1950 and 1973 have asbestos tiles, asbestos insulation or spray-on asbestos for ceilings. (Of those, spray-on asbestos is the most dangerous.)

The situation came to public attention when a New Jersey physician charged that spray-on asbestos ceilings in the schools which his 13-year-old patient attended were the cause of his chronic respiratory illness. State and federal EPA officials visited all schools in the district and closed six of them during the first week in January. The U.S. Office of Education, Denver Region, says that schools built after April 1, 1973 should not be a hazard because a federal regulation went in effect then to practically ban the use of asbestos fiber in construction.

Taft Institute to sponsor 36 seminars

Students in the Robert A. Taft Institute of Government Seminars can earn tuition to one of the 36 universities participating in the Taft program. The summer seminars are specifically for elementary and secondary educators responsible for government classes and each group is limited to about 30-35 participants. Selected students will receive assistance for tuition and books and an allowance. The seminars focus on American politics—the constitutional framework, the two-party system, candidate selection, local government, the press, and citizen impact among other topics. Montana teachers apply for seminars in near-by states, which, according to Taft seminar literature, are Wyoming and Washington, although seminars in other states may be available. More information is available from Ed Eschler, Social Studies Supervisor, in the State Superintendent's office, State Capitol, Helena, 59601 or from the Taft Institute of Government, 420 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017.

Lewis and Clark Caverns open new science tour for schools

The Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park has invited school groups to tour the underground site. Stephanie Gibert, Acting Manager, said the previous tour, known as the "fantasy tour," has been replaced with a more scientifically oriented one "designed to answer the who, what, where, when, why, and hows asked by our visitors."

Special rates of 50 cents per person are available to groups who give the Caverns' management two weeks notice of the time and number in a proposed visit.

The reorganization of the tour was intended to help alleviate some problems groups encountered with the previous tour and Gibert offered the following advice. She said, "Because our staff is small early in the season, we ask that the students be well chaperoned and that one person be in charge of paying for the tickets.

"Please allow your group plenty of time at the Caverns. Including the walk to and from the Caverns, the tour is approximately two miles long and takes about two hours. The tour size is limited to 30 persons so groups larger than that will be split into two or more tours staggered at a minimum of 15 minute intervals."

For more information, write or call Stephanie Gibert, Acting Manager, Lewis and Clark Caverns, Box 1024, Three Forks 59752, 287-3541.

Social Studies Convention to study aboriginal culture

The Montana Council for the Social Studies has announced it's annual convention in Missoula, April 1 and 2 in the Village Motor Inn. This year's theme is Walkabout: The Australian Aboriginal Traditional of Coping with Life and Change. The two-day session will be highlighted with workshops, a Friday evening banquet, and a Saturday luncheon headed by featured speakers. Additional information concerning the convention can be obtained by writing Tim Gregori or Willis Curdy, Hellgate High School, Missoula 59801 or Ed Eschler, Social Science Consultant, Office of Public Instruction, Helena 59601.

HABITAT materials available

Robert L. Stilger, Executive Director of the Northwest Regional Foundation, wrote the Office recently to advertise the availability of some free resource materials.

The Northwest Regional Foundation is a non-profit educational corporation based in Spokane, Wash. It received a grant from the U.S. Office of Education to develop resource materials on human settlements in conjunction with the 1976 United Nations HABITAT conference.

The foundation has produced two 35 page resource kits and has 3,000 available for free distribution in the region on a first-come-first-served basis. Also, the foundation has loan copies of a 60 minute documentary, "A COMMUNITY CALLED EARTH" which was televised nationally on PBS in January. Copies are on ¾ in. video cassette. The address of the foundation is P.O. Box 5296, Spokane, Washington 99205, (509) 455-9255.

Inservice workshops set for child study teams

A workshop in comprehensive evaluation designed as inservice training for child study team members will be conducted in Kalispell March 9 and 10. The workshops feature consultants Jean Nazzaro, a member of the National Council of Exceptional Children, and Jane Mercer, Professor of Sociology at the University of California in Riverside. For more information call George C. Camp, School Psychology Services, the Great Falls Public Schools, 761-5800.

Deadline nears for job exchange

The state of Victoria, Australia, and several U.S. education agencies, including Montana school districts through the Office of Public Instruction, provide for about 40 U.S. teachers to exchange positions with Australian teachers for a year. The application time is near for the 1978 International Teaching Fellowship.

Teachers of equivalent qualifications and positions in either primary or secondary levels exchange homes and teaching jobs from January to January. Participants maintain the salary and benefits from the positions they leave and must promise to return to those positions. Transportation costs are the responsibility of the participants, but charter rates are available.

Although the exchange usually is between working teachers, a member of the State Superintendent's office, Ed Eschler, exchanged positions with a member of the Victoria state education office in 1975. More information is available from Eschler, Office of Public Instruction, Capitol, Helena 59601. The application deadline is March 21; to speed the application process, call toll-free 1-800-332-3402.

Alve Thomas

Robert Stockton

Stockton, Thomas take reins of OPI departments

Robert Stockton, School Finance Specialist in the State Superintendent's office, has been named Administrator of the Department of Financial Services by Superintendent Georgia Rice. Stockton will be in charge of divisions within the department for legal services, surplus property, school foods service, data processing and office budgeting and accounting as well as school finance.

Stockton came to the office in 1965 at the request of former Superintendent of Public Instruction, Harriet Miller to administer school finance, an area in which he said, "at that time you simply couldn't get an education. You had to learn it on the job." Apparently he learned his specialty well. He has become known as the office answer man about issues ranging from district mill levies, to state school finance models. Before the office hired a staff attorney, Stockton acted as short stop for school law questions.

Stockton said he believes Montana is one of the five most advanced states in equalized and efficient financial delivery. "The foundation is entirely equalized and as a rule we find there is no more than two or three mills of difference between districts on maximum budgets without a vote," he said.

"But that doesn't mean we can't do better or that we can't refine the system. There are problems with funding per child. The cost to operate a classroom for 15 students is about the same as the cost for a classroom of 20 except for a few consumable supplies and texts. Yet we pay schools proportionally on enrollment."

Stockton said that to study the present system and to examine alternate finance structures, the office recently received funding for a year-long grant from the National Center for Educational Statistics in the Office of Education. "We are happy to have the funding for the study to look at some program and staff costs. It's not a new idea. Montana used to have a classroom unit payment," he said.

While Stockton keeps the money matters moving, he also looks after the school food service reimbursements. Because of Stockton's experience with school law, the staff attorney is attached to his department for administration. Stockton also has been assigned responsibility for the office data processing center. "Probably because of my background as an industrial chemist, I see computers as a production tool rather than a research tool, and the data processing division will be used mainly in school scheduling, budget estimations and internal office use," he said.

Stockton is originally from Texas, settled in Kalispell in 1955 and worked as an analytical chemist for 10 years for the Anaconda Company before his move to the State Superintendent's staff.

The man in charge of Office of Public Instruction services most often seen by schools is Alve Thomas, newly appointed Deputy Superintendent and head of the Department of Instructional Services.

The veteran school administrator is responsible for a department having units for basic skills, special education and federal programs. He said the purpose in organizing the three units within a department is to encourage coordination in the services emmanating from the Superintendent's office.

"Of the 250 or so staff in the Superintendent's office," Thomas said, "the Department of Basic Skills has 150, so the bulk of staff is there, but more importantly this is where most of the services to schools lie."

He gave several examples of how service to schools would be coordinated. For example, he said "The office is beginning to keep a centralized file of school visitation reports. By doing this and by mapping the travels of the Superintendent's staff, we can see if any areas of the state are being neglected. A staff member considering a trip can determine if that school has been recently visited and if so, what subjects or for what concerns. Possibly he can follow up on a previous visit by another supervisor.

"Also if we learn that a school in Sidney, for example, wants help in physical education we can call to see if there are other subjects where we can provide service and we can call other schools in the region to determine if several schools might want to take a PIR day so we can send people for a workshop for 15 schools instead of just one."

Thomas said he hopes the workshop program in the Office of Public Instruction would continue. "I'm a great believer in the workshops and I think that overall we have a favorable report on them." He said during years when as many as seven regional workshops were conducted, up to 90 per cent of the teachers in Montana could have attended them. "For the money, it's one of the best ways to contact teachers," he said.

According to Thomas, the special education unit will not have many changes until the results are in from the Special Education Task Force which was convened in January by Superintendent Rice. "I'm sure they will have some recommendations on the proposed rules and regulations and they will look at our regions to see if that is the best administrative approach. Right now, regional services is the only way we can get special education to the small school," he said.

"I'm proud of the fact that Montana is the only state in the union that has gone to 100 per cent state funding in special education. There are some things wrong; the budgeting is complex, but on the whole, we have moved as fast as any state in the union. Other states are having their problems too. Their legislation is new and the federal legislation is even newer."

Thomas said some special education regulations amount to civil rights enforcement in addition to being program regulation. "So those people who say, 'why don't you refuse the federal money if you don't like all the regulations,' don't understand that it just isn't possible because whether we accept the money or not, we must abide by some of the regulations."

The federal programs unit will operate a little differently from past years because the federal education programs have been reorganized. "Title IV is more or less a new program with the consolidation of Title II and NDEA III and IV." Thomas said, "We hope to continue the exemplary and innovative programs started under Title III. If we have had any advisory group that was successful, in my mind, it was the Title III group. It was well thought out; it had first class people; and most importantly, its recommendations were adhered to.

"I want to emphasize," Thomas said, "that the primary emphasis of the department is not regulatory, it is service to schools. Whether it's helping a school write its philosophy and goals or sending out a subject matter specialist, we hope to be able to do that."

Thomas, a native of Butte, taught, became principal for seven years and was superintendent for 12 years in Sheridan. He was superintendent in Red Lodge when he moved to Helena in 1966 to become High School Supervisor. Thomas became administrative assistant to the assistant superintendent under former State Superintendent Harriett Miller and was Assistant Superintendent for Program Coordination under former Superintendent Dolores Colburg.

MSU to be site of Indian ed. Conference

The Seventh Annual Montana Indian Education Conference, an update of happenings in the education of Montana's Indian students, will be conducted on the campus of Montana State University in Bozeman on March 31 and April 1.

Sponsored by the Office of Public Instruction, Indian Education Division, the conference will feature general sessions, small group workshops, cultural and curriculum displays, arts and crafts displays and a banquet followed by a pow-wow.

Supt. Georgia Rice will address the opening session on March 31 at 9:30 a.m. in the Student Union.

The conference is being co-sponsored by the Center for Native American Studies at Montana State University. Bob Peregoy, Director of Native American Studies at Bozeman, will be Master of Ceremonies for the conference. Further information may be obtained from Bob Parsley, Manager, Division of Indian Education, OPI, Capitol, Helena 59601.

Legion units to volunteer help with safety programs

Last year 22,133 young people were killed in traffic accidents. Many more received crippling injuries. To help reduce these statistics, the national president of the American Legion Auxiliary, Mrs. Paul Brown of Idaho, has taken as her personal project for this year, "School Traffic Safety."

The American Legion Auxiliary has 115 organizations in Montana and each local unit has been encouraged to volunteer services to the schools in their communities. If your school has not heard from an Auxiliary volunteer and you would like help with your bicycle, pedestrian or passenger safety program, a member of your local unit likely will volunteer to help.

More information is available from Else Daniels, Montana State Chairman, School Traffic Safety Program, Box 157, Scobey 59263 487-2227, or Curt Hahn, Traffic and Safety Education Consultant, Office of Public Instruction, Capitol, Helena 59601, 449-2677 or 1-800-332-3402 toll-free.

Education Hotline receives 1,500 calls

Clemy Willard, Reception/Referral Desk Manager, transferred more than 1,500 calls from Montana educators and citizens to Office of Public Instruction staff during the month of February.

the Reel News

by Bruce MacIntyre

In the last issue of *Montana Schools*, "Reel News" tried to explain the problems late returns cause the film library and, more important, the difficulty caused to school staff who have ordered a film someone else has not returned on time.

An even more critical problem that can prevent you from having the films you order is film damage. Some damage is to be expected but a few figures on the size to which the problem has grown might help explain just how serious it is.

In the first place, you should know that as frequently as films are used, they remain an expensive item. The average cost of our 281 most popular films is $256. Some run as high as $500 (*Nanook of the North*); *The Red Balloon* cost $495, and *Dr. Seuss on the Loose* has a price of $355.

It hurts then, when the film library has to spend nearly $10,000 on repair and replacement of damaged films as we have in just the last three months alone. Currently, 262 films are out of circulation because of excessive damage and, of course, these are some of our most popular titles. Last month a new title, out for the first time, was returned with sprocket holes ripped out of the first 45 feet.

Obviously if we are dedicating this much of our budget to film repair, we can not be purchasing the contemporary films that can encourage lively conversation in your classes. We calculate that it would cost more than twice our entire annual budget just to buy duplicates to meet your needs—and that would be without a cent spent on repairs.

You can help by simply being careful; here are some suggestions that can prevent costly damage to films:

1. Never leave a film running unattended.
2. Clean the film path on your projector with a cotton swab and rubbing alcohol once a week.
3. Trim the leading edge of the film before you insert it in an auto-load projector.
4. Your projector (no matter how old) is designed to run quietly and smoothly. If it starts to chatter, something is wrong. Shut it off and find out why it's making that "funny noise." The color film it may be destroying costs 45 cents per foot.
5. The leader is there to protect the film; please don't tear it off.

You may wish to update your film catalogue with the following information. These films have been withdrawn from circulation and no longer are available.

234	The Draftsman (1942)
249	Ground Water (1960)
2175	Clay in Action (1948)
2270	What Is Soil (1949)
3148	World Trade For Better Living (1959)
3563	Archery With Howard Hill (1953)
4522	Grammar: Verbs and Ways We Use Them (1959)
4934	Miracle of Feeding America (1960)
5045	Geography of South America: Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay (1962)
5144	What's Inside the Earth (1962)
5375	Sing High, Sing Low: The Mayflower Trip (1963)
4336	Rocks and Minerals (1960) Both Copies
5620	Nouns and Verbs vs. Adjectives and Adverbs (1964)
5788	Pronunciation & Accentuation (1964)
5967	Flower Structure (1965)
6201	Spirit of Rome (1966)
6669	To Tell or Not To Tell (1968)
7785	American Indian Life on the Southern Plains, Part III, The Man's Role in the Family (1972)
5334	Check Collection Process (1963)
6580	Dem Dry Bones (1967)
7119	Ball Skills (1969)
4905	Drill Press (1960)
3561	Hand Saws
6398	Safe Shop
6566	Hawaii: America's Tropical State
7109	Vienna Boy's Choir
6483	Our Immigrant Heritage
7705	Our Endangered Environment-Air
6675	A Fire Called Jeremiah
6526	Die Tiere in Der Stat
3976	Western Germany: Land of the People

We also have purchased additional copies of the following films. If you were unable to schedule these earlier in the year, please try again.

7974	Big Hom
8084	Eye to Eye With Wild Animals
8291	Scrap of Paper, Piece of String
8299	Foxfire
8688	Summer Camp
8687	The Runt
8686	The Hospital
8685	What is a Friend
8684	Lying
8683	Dope is for Dopes
8682	Do Your Own Thing
8681	Check It Out

We would also like to call your attention to the General Motors films listed in the newest catalogue supplement (numbers 8764, 8798, 8803-8807). The General Motors corporation has deposited these films in our library for your use and is no longer servicing your requests themselves. They will forward your orders to us for action rather than scheduling films. If you order these films directly from us, you will get faster service and save us having to return the order to you for resubmission.

If you have any questions about film library policies, suggestions for better service, or comments about films you think we should withdraw or purchase, please write or call, and I'll try to answer by responding in future editions of *The Reel News*. Write or call Bruce MacIntyre, Library Media Consultant, Office of Public Instruction, Capitol, Helena 59601, 1-800-332-3402.

Race, ethnic data required by Califano

In case some Montana school districts have not yet complied, the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, Joseph Califano, has reaffirmed that school districts will be required to complete reporting of racial and ethnic data for the Office of Civil Rights (forms 101 and 639 for all districts and form 102 for 65 selected Montana districts). Since the reporting deadline was in February, the Office of Civil Rights has extended its deadline until April 30. For those school districts receiving Emergency School Aid (ESAA), the reporting requirements for that racial and ethnic information is March 1. However, completion of ESAA reports does not alter the requirement to complete forms 101 and 102 by April 30.

In addition, Sec. Califano announced that the ethnic data survey will be conducted again next year for the 1977-78 school year. That decision represents a change from the original design of the survey which was to be conducted for 1976-77 and again two years later. No new questions will be added to the survey next year, the announcment said.

Advertising fraud reported in schools

Superintendent Rice received a letter this month from Robert Deschamps, Missoula County Attorney, warning schools about an advertising fraud scheme that has been tried in at least one school in western Montana.

Progress Publishing Co. of Los Angeles told a Montana school superintendent by phone that he was required by law to have an advertisment for Equal Employment Opportunity placed in the Los Angeles area in the "Herald Dispatch." The superintendent replied that he could not act without the approval of the school board but the advertising firm sent what appeared to be an "approved" invoice to the school business office for advertising that never appeared.

The superintendent referred the matter to the Western Montana Special Prosecution Unit. That agency said similar fraud schemes have been found in Montana conducted by another Los Angeles firm known as Space Advertising Agency but also operating under more than 20 other trade names.

Space Advertising Agency has a judgment against it in Iowa for sending invoices for advertising that schools were told they were required to print in minority newspapers. The fraud thrives on the school paying invoices that are not approved or that the advertising firm tells the school business office were approved by the board or superintendent.

Dick Disney, State Consumer Counsel, said his office has received four or five complaints from Montana agencies which had been told they should advertise in the Negro Newspaper Group and the Japanese Advertising Group, trade names for Space Advertising.

Surplus Property: a $2 million business in salt shakers and scrub brushes

The Surplus Property Division of the Office of Public Instruction is a source of curiosity and fascination to just about everyone who learns of it. Perhaps it's because most of us have an inability to resist a bargain or perhaps it's because surplus property has such an intriguing assortment of goodies. Whatever the reason, it probably is best known to *Montana Schools* readers for the list of items made available to schools.

As a matter of fact, schools have purchased millions of dollars worth of everything from automobiles to art supplies from Surplus Property. The Division of Surplus Property has been attached to the State Superintendent's office since 1940.

According to Bill Ernst, Division Manager, Montana is one of fewer than 10 states in which surplus property has not been incorporated in a state purchasing agency. The arrangement seems to work just fine for Montana; schools account for between 50 and 60 per cent of the surplus property business. Other eligible recipients are public health and civil defense institutions.

Each year, eligible customers or "donees" take nearly $2 million worth of surplus property from the Montana surplus operation. That figure is deflated and misleading because it represents the total value of items listed at the prices at which they entered the federal inventory. In other words, a surplus screw driver worth 20 cents in 1940 still is listed at 20 cents even though it might be worth $1 on today's market. The fact that surplus property is a big business is made all the more interesting by the fact that it is an entirely self-supporting business operating according to supply and demand. Ernst said Surplus Property doesn't receive any money from federal or state appropriations.

Making a thriving business from knowing how many hospitals or search and rescue units or schools need a dozen parachutes or a 20 ton machine press is not a common skill. Ernst applies 27 years of experience to the buying and selling of surplus property. It is up to him to decide what some 1,000 donees in Montana might need, to travel to federal surplus centers to purchase it and to merchandise it. He does all of that with a remarkable degree of success. Most of the surplus property is hardly in new condition, so it is all the more remarkable that in five years of business, representing between $8 and $10 million of business, only two trailer loads or about $150,000 worth of property has been salvaged.

Besides knowing who needs what, there are some other unique conditions on the surplus business. First, the amount of surplus property the state is allowed is determined by the federal government according to a formula for state population and per capita income. Second, even when Ernst knows how much he can have, he can't simply call a wholesaler to place an order. When the surplus inventory warrants restocking, the crew makes a trip in the division's 18-wheel truck to centers mostly in Utah and California, and they are not entirely sure what they will find there.

In addition to securing surplus property and maintaining stock, Ernst also manages the warehouse which is a pretty busy shopping center. A monthly average of 350 visitors and 125 phone inquiries must be tended. All of this is accomplished by a staff of two warehousemen and a bookkeeper.

So if your school is in desperate need of a left-handed cantilevered widget, Ernst's staff is a good source. A number of items useful to schools are usually in stock. However, Ernst said these simply have not been available for about three months and thus you haven't seen them advertised in *Montana Schools* since the September issue. Ernst said he hopes this shortage will be ended soon. In the meantime, he said he can make a special effort to secure items a school knows it needs.

If you haven't used the services of Surplus Property it is a simple process. First, your board of trustees must apply to have its eligibility as a donee certified. The board then can designate a staff member to act as the agent to arrange for purchase and transfer of property.

The best way to find out about what is available and how to get it is to call Bill Ernst on the toll-free education hotline, 1-800-332-3402; leave your name and number, and he will call you to save your telephone cost. You may write to him at Division of Surplus Property, Office of Public Instruction, Helena 59601. If you want to call direct, the number is 449-2084. The Surplus Property warehouse is located at 1320 Bozeman Ave.

House Bills

HB 34 - PH - Bardanouve

To revise and clarify the laws relating to teachers' retirement and death and disability benefits.

HB 69 - PH - Gunderson, South, et al

To authorize the Board of Public Education to employ an executive officer to administer the vocational education program.

HB 119 - PH - Bradley, Dussault, et al

To provide for community education programs within the existing adult education scheme.

HB 185 - A - Keyser, Seifert, South

To exempt candidates for the office of trustee of certain school districts from the provisions of the election laws relating to campaign treasurers.

HB 199 - K - Metcalf, Holmes

To require school district trustees to grant the use of school buildings and facilities for nonschool activities.

HB 239 - PH - Brand

To provide for denial of unemployment benefits to school employees whenever they have a contract or reasonable assurance of returning to work in the next academic year.

HB 249 - PH - South

To provide for closed meetings of public bodies when the demands of privacy...for discussion of collective bargaining proposals.

HB 274 - K - O'Connell, Teague, et al

To provide a procedure for effectively petitioning school boards with respect to any action within their power.

HB 289 - PH - Quilici, Menahan, et al

To change the composition of the Teachers' Retirement Board.

HB 305 - PH - Kessler, Cooney, et al

To establish a state policy for adult basic education allowing a state fund for its support.

HB 315 - PH - Dassinger, Teague, et al

To allow trustees of elementary and high school districts to provide for a religious instruction released time program.

HB 365 - A - South

An act relating to the school foundation program.

HB 383 - K - Uhde

To exempt all teacher retirement benefits from income tax.

HB 391 - K - Kessler, J. Gunderson, et al

To provide for the election of school district trustees in first-class elementary school districts...by means of single-member subdistricts.

HB 409 - PH - Meloy

To provide that whenever a school district receives another district into its boundaries...becomes subject to the indebtedness of the original territory.

HB 410 - PH - Dussault, Tropila, et al

To allow school districts to establish programs for serving gifted and talented children and providing for funding of these programs.

HB 443 - PH - Estenson, Meloy

To provide a statement and hearing before the Board of Trustees for termination of a public school teacher.

HB 448 - PH - Barrett

To allow school districts to operate less than 180 days under certain emergency conditions.

HB 463 - K - Holmes, Bengtson, et al

To revise the requirements and procedures for fulfilling the requirements for American Indian Studies instruction.

HB 467 - A - Kimble

To allow school districts to contract for Special Education services.

HB 485 - PH - J. Gunderson, Bengtson, et al

An act regarding the use and administration of corporal punishment in public schools.

HB 489 - PH - Eudaily, Waldron, Meyer

To allow school district voted tax levies to be effective for 2 years.

HB 578 - A - Courtney, Harrington, et al

To increase the maximum-general-fund-buget-without-a-voted-levy schedules for elementary and high schools.

HB 666 - K - Vincent, Dussault

To reduce the maximum class loads allowed in certain elementary school classrooms.

HB 707 - A - Sivertsen, Conroy, et al

To provide that locally based Indian Teacher-Training Programs be administered by local school districts or Indian Nonprofit Corporations in cooperation with the units of Higher Education in Montana.

HB 744 - K - Barrett

To require private schools to offer the Basic Instructional Program defined by the Board of Public Education.

HB 765 - PH - Driscoll

To generally revise the laws relating to the Teachers' Retirement System with respect to qualified tax status.

HB 768 - A - Kimble, Conroy, et al

To recognize and declare eligible for State Aid Indian Controlled Public School and Tribal Education System.

HJR 56 - K - Waldron, Kimble, et al

Determining to resist all efforts by any person or organization which may be seeking the amendment, repeal, or subversion of the intent of the 1973 Act requiring teachers on or near Indian Reservations to receive Indian Studies Instruction by July 1, 1979.

Legend -

PH = Passed, House
PS = Passed, Senate
K = Killed
A = Action in House of Origination

Senate Bills

SB 62 - A - Fasbender, Mathers

Transferring all of the powers, duties, and functions of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, except those prescribed by the 1972 Mont. Constitution, to the Board of Public Education; providing for an executive director of the Board of Public Education.

SB 68 - K - Blaylock, Regan, Thomas, et al

Relating to the certification of teachers; creating a board of professional standards and licensure.

SB 77 - A - Kolstad, Thiessen, Stephens, et al

Raising the legal age for consuming or possessing alcoholic beverages to 19 and submitting the proposed act to the electors.

SB 138 - PS - Mathers, Fasbender

Authorizing the Board of Public Education to appoint an executive secretary and staff.

SB 144 - PS - Watt, Warden, Dover

Authorizing county superintendents of schools to accept and disburse money in those districts which do not employ a district superintendent.

SB 188 - A - Thomas

Raising the reimbursement rate to parents transporting their children to school.

SB 243 - PS - Murphy, Bergren, et al

Deleting the provision that a nontenure teacher whose contract has not been renewed may request a statement of the reasons for termination.

SB 271 - PS - Blaylock

Providing for changes in financial schedules for the maximum general fund budgets for elementary and high schools.

SB 300 - PS - Watt, Murray

Eliminating the County Boards of School Budget supervisors.

SB 304 - A - Lee, Fasbender, et al

Requiring every teacher to hold a valid Montana certificate and providing that individual contracts be consistent with Collective Bargaining agreements.

SB 410 - K - Blaylock

Authorizing a school board to establish an Equipment Reserve Fund for purchase of major items of of Instructional Equipment.

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MAR 10 '77 STATE DOCUMENTS

Montana schools

Greetings

From Georgia Rice

I believe that Montana's 1976-77 legislative session reflects the same concerns apparent on the national level in education. The demand for equal educational opportunity for all citizens coupled with a concern for basic literacy needs, seems evident on both levels.

In particular, Montana legislators are concerned with student needs and adequate funding to meet those needs. Although educators and related organizations have made an effort to inform legislators of fiscal needs, increased school funding needs are best expressed by you in the field describing to your legislator the impact of state funding on the classrooms in your school and on you as an educator serving students. It would be of value to all Montana students and educators if you would contact your legislator and explain the increased costs of education in your classrooms and the impact of legislative decisions.

An educational forum composed of representatives from our educational organizations has been meeting regularly during the past weeks primarily to discuss legislation. Interest has been expressed by the members of this forum in continuing this activity after the legislature. I hope that this forum will serve as yet another avenue of communication for all who are interested in education.

As part of a pilot project serving seven western Montana counties, Jim Palmer has been retained by the Office of Public Instruction as an educational service representative. Jim, who will maintain his residence in Thompson Falls, will provide services for local schools and increase communication between local schools and the Helena office.

Terry Brown, former Pupil Transportation and Safety Education director for the Forsyth schools, joined our staff on February 28 as Pupil Transportation Safety Consultant. Terry, a native of Miles City, will offer services to Montana's 2500 bus drivers and contractors. If you would like to contact Terry, please use our toll-free hotline number 1-800-332-3402 or call him directly at 449-3167.

Have a pleasant March and when you are in Helena, please stop in.

Calendar

March

State Future Homemakers of America Conference, Bozeman	23-25
Office Education Association State Leadership Conference, Missoula	24-25
Annual Montana Indian Education Conference, Bozeman	31-April 1

April

Montana Council of Teachers of Mathematics Annual Conference, Bozeman	1-2
Northwest Music Festival & Music Educators National Conference Northwest Division Meeting, Seattle	3-6
National Business Education Association Annual Conference, Houston	6-9
Easter	10
National Library Week	11-15
State Future Farmers of America Leadership Conference, Bozeman	13-15
Music Festivals, Districts 1,2,4,5,6, & 7	15-16
Montana Association of School Administrators Conference, Helena	16-17
State Superintendent's Annual Education Conference, Helena	18-19
Montana Association of County Superintendents Annual Meeting, Helena	19-20
National Association of Elementary Principals Conference, Las Vegas	18-22
Music Festivals, Districts 3,8,9,10,11, & 12	22-23
National High School Distributive Education Clubs of America Career Development Conference, Anaheim	27-May 2
Arbor Day	30

Montana Schools is distributed in the public schools and to the members of boards, associations and organizations concerned with education in Montana. Copies are available on request and comments are welcome.

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INSIDE-OUT

Interviews with the House and Senate Education Committee Chairpersons

Two of OPI's capable old hands become department heads

Surplus Property is big school business

Legislative update

Plus: *Spring Conventions*
Advertising Fraud
Reel News
Asbestos ceilings
Lewis and Clark Caverns
Australian teaching exchange
and more . . . .

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